

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY BONN PRIORITY

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EXDIS

FOL REPEAT LONDON 7833 ACTION SECSTATE NATO OSLO 20 MAY.

QUOTE

S E C R E T LONDON 07833

EXDIS

DEPARTMENT PASS SECDEF ACTION

STATE FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY VEST, DEFENSE FOR DEP SEC
ELLSWORTH, DDR E CURRIE, ASD ISA MCAULIFFE, CJCS GENERAL

DASD BERGOLD; USNATO FOR AMB STRAUSZ-HUPE

E.O. LL652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, MARR' UK, NATO

SUBJ: NATO AWACS PROCUREMENT

1. AT A MEETING ON 19 MAY, REPRESENTATIVES OF THE NATO
AEW PROGRAM OFFICE AND FRG, UK AND US DEPUTY ARMAMENTS
DIRECTORS DISCUSSED NATO AWACS FUNDING ALTERNATIVES. THOSE

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PRESENT INCLUDED AIR COMMODORE SCRIMGEOUR AND COLONEL

EGLET OF NAPO; TRIENES OF FRG; MACKLEN, HENN' PERRY AND JOHN ROBERTS OF UK; BASIL AND DEJONGE' DDR AND E; AND MAJOR GENERAL BOWMAN OF ISA.

2. NAPO REPS DISCUSSED THE EFFECTS OF VARYING THE SIZE, TIMING AND CAPABILITY ENHANCEMENT OF NATO AWACS. STARTING ASSUMPTION WAS THAT FRG, UK AND US WOULD BE PRINCIPLE CONTRIBUTORS TO PROCUREMENT PHASE WITH OTHER ALLIES CONTRIBUTING TO OPERATING COSTS OVER A LONGER PERIOD OF TIME IN ORDER TO ACCOUNT FOR THEIR FAIR SHARE OF TOTAL COSTS.

3. ROUGH ANALYSIS INDICATED THAT THE FRG, UK AND US COULD NOT POSSIBLY FUND A NATO AWACS PRODUCTION SCHEDULE OF ONE AIRCRAFT PER MONTH STARTING IN FY 77. HOWEVER, THEY MIGHT WELL MANAGE A PRODUCTION SCHEDULE AT A RATE OF ONE AIRCRAFT EVERY OTHER MONTH, ESPECIALLY IF INTERWOVEN WITH US AWACS PRODUCTION FOR FY 78, RESULTING IN AN EFFECTIVE RATE OF ONE NATO AWACS EVERY FOUR MONTHS FOR THE FIRST YEAR. UNDER SUCH A SCHEDULE, COSTS FOR CY 76 WOULD BE LIMITED TO DOLLARS 15 MILLION R AND D ON ENHANCEMENTS AND COSTS FOR CY 77 WOULD BE APPROXIMATELY DOLLARS 300 MILLION. FURTHERMORE, A REDUCTION IN ENHANCEMENTS COULD SAVE UP TO DOLLARS 600 MILLION IN THE EARLY YEARS OF THE PROGRAM. UK REPS SAID THAT A PROGRAM SCHEDULE OF THIS TYPE COULD INCLUDE HEAVY FRONT END PAYMENTS FOR THE UK WHICH HAS AEW MONEY IN ITS BUDGET IN ORDER TO PERMIT THE FRG TO PROVIDE ITS SHARE LATER IN THE PROCUREMENT PROGRAM.

4. TRIENES, FRG, SAID NAPO PLAN WOULD PROVIDE GOOD BASIS FOR STUDY AND THAT HE WOULD PROBABLY INVITE NAPO REPS TO PRESENT PLAN IN BONN. HE REMINDED GROUP THAT FRG PROBABLY WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO MAKE PROCUREMENT COMMITMENTS UNTIL SPRING OF 1977 DUE TO ELECTIONS THIS FALL. EVEN THEN FRG WOULD HAVE SEVERE PROBLEMS BECAUSE NONE OF THE THREE MILITARY SERVICES WERE WILLING TO CUT OTHER ITEMS IN THEIR BUDGETS TO PROVIDE FOR AWACS. HOWEVER, HE ALSO SAID THAT FRG MOD COULD MAKE A COMMITMENT SUBJECT TO REFERRAL TO BUNDESTAG FOR APPROVAL. AT THIS POINT, TRIENES WAS FORCED TO LEAVE MEETING BECAUSE OF ANOTHER SCHEDULED COMMITMENT.

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5. PERRY, UK, SAID THAT HE AND NATO ASYG LABERGE HAD DISCUSSED POSSIBLE NEED FOR SPECIFIC NATIONAL COMMITMENTS IN JUNE ON NUMBERS OF AIRCRAFT NEEDED, ENHANCEMENTS, AND COST SHARES. MACKLEN, UK, SAID THAT TOO MUCH ELBOW TWISTING IN JUNE COULD KILL THE PROGRAM AND THAT WHAT WAS NEEDED WAS ONLY A MINISTERIAL DECISION TO CONTINUE NATO AWACS PROGRAM PLANNING LEADING TO PROGRAM DECISIONS IN THE FALL.

IT WOULD BE ENOUGH IF EACH COUNTRY INDICATED THE TYPE OF
PARTICIPATION IT WAS CONSIDERING.

ARMSTRONG

UNQUOTE ROBINSON

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